

'Testicle-Eating' Piranha Relative Found in Russian Pond

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The  Moscow Times

The Baltic Sea is not known for its flesh-stripping tropical fish, but this season, a close relative of the piranha reputed to have a fondness for nibbling on men's testicles has appeared in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad on the Baltic.

A local fisher nabbed several South American pacu in a city pond and handed them over to marine biologists for identification, Interfax reported Friday.

The pacu is a cousin of the omnivorous piranha. Unlike its fearsome relative, it mostly subsists on a pacific diet of nuts and algae, but last summer media dubbed the pacu the "ball cutter" when another was caught far from home, this time in the Oresund Sound between Denmark and Sweden. News reports cited experts as saying that the fish was known for attacking the testicles of male swimmers in its native South America.

Pacus, which can be kept in domestic conditions, can grow up to 90 cm in size, though they rarely outgrow half a meter in captivity.

The fish in Kaliningrad were likely released into the pond by a local aquarist after they grew too large to keep at home, the report said.

The edible fish are now the legitimate prey of local fishermen. But they would not have survived the Baltic winter in any case, Interfax said.

This is not the only recent case of pets in Russia outgrowing owners' expectations: Earlier this month, a Vietnamese potbelly pig was abandoned in eastern Moscow after swelling to a whopping 120 kilos despite being sold as a dwarf pig. The sow was shipped to an animal shelter whose owners promised to help her lose weight.

See also:

[Real-Life 'Snakes on a Plane' Get Man Denied Entry to Russia](#)

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